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RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 1857  
RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY 2003  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 1682  
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL PRIORITY 2621  
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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PARM](#) [KNNP](#) [UNSC](#) [KN](#) [RS](#)

SUBJECT: PREPARING THE GROUND FOR UNSC ACTION ON DPRK

REF: A. STATE 168337  
[¶](#)B. MOSCOW 11169

Classified By: DCM Daniel A. Russell for reasons 1.4 (b/d/h).

[¶](#)11. (S) Summary: DFM Alekseyev told the Ambassador October 6 that Russia found a DPRK nuclear test to be "absolutely unacceptable" and stressed that the North Korean regime had received this message from Russia in clear and unmistakable terms. Responding to the Ambassador's urging that Russia support action in the Security Council, Alekseyev said that a Presidential Statement would likely be adopted on October 6 and that Russia was ready to consider strong measures in the event North Korea tested. An MFA North Korean expert separately conveyed to us that Russia had convoked the North Korean Ambassador in Moscow and had delivered a strong message in Pyongyang. He said that the DPRK was under economic pressure and had few alternatives left to strike out. Another MFA North Korean expert told us that Russian experts believed it was possible that Pakistan had supplied the DPRK with the technical assistance necessary to test a nuclear device. End Summary.

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DFM Alekseyev

[¶](#)12. (C) The Ambassador raised reftel points with Deputy Foreign Minister Alekseyev October 6 and urged Russia to support a UN Security Council Presidential Statement to be issued later that day. The Ambassador reviewed U.S. expectations that a Chapter VII resolution would be adopted in the event of a North Korean nuclear test and highlighted the desired elements of the resolution. Alekseyev responded by underlining that Russia considered a DPRK nuclear test to be "absolutely unacceptable." He said the Russians had given the North Koreans the strongest possible advice not to proceed with a test and that Pyongyang had received the clearest possible signal on this account from Russia as well as other members of the Six Party talks.

[¶](#)13. (C) Reviewing action in the UN Security Council, Alekseyev said a Presidential Statement would likely be adopted on Friday. In the event North Korea conducts a nuclear test, Russia would be "100 percent willing" to consider strong action by the Council. Reiterating his October 4 comments, he noted that the Council would need to act carefully and again pointed to the key role China would play in Council consideration of Chapter VII measures. The Ambassador noted Russia's support for the Presidential Statement.

¶4. (C) In a separate Embassy meeting with the MFA Ambassador-at-large on the DPRK, Valeriy Sukhinin made the following points:

-- It was difficult for the GOR to gauge the seriousness of the DPRK threat. There was no outward manifestation of preparations for a nuclear test and the country did not appear to be on a different alert footing; however, that was also the case during the July missile tests.

-- The MFA had already convoked the North Korean Ambassador, who said that the DPRK was being forced by U.S. pressure to move toward a nuclear test and that the regime did not want to take this step. The DPRK sought "sincere denuclearization," but was being confronted with the one-sided destruction of its economy. U.S. economic sanctions, the DPRK Ambassador maintained, represented a "direct threat to the higher interests of the country." The Russian Ambassador in Pyongyang had met with a Deputy Foreign Minister on October 3, underscoring strong Russian concerns over the DPRK threat to test. Sukhinin pointed to the Russian MFA statement, and reiterated that the GOR shared the U.S. conviction that the DPRK posed a grave threat to the NPT and international nonproliferation norms.

-- Sukhinin (who had served 17 years in North Korea) offered a variety of motives for the timing of the DPRK threat. First, the "Eastern mentality" was accustomed to quiet diplomacy and the public affront of the economic sanctions and the closure of accounts in the Macao bank could have prompted the DPRK to lash out. Second, it was a combination of both the economic pressure that the DPRK was under, as well as a tactic to attract the attention of the international community. The DPRK had exhausted political statements, had launched missiles, and now was left with the threat of a nuclear test to make its mark.

-- While there was no meaningful opposition in the DPRK, the GOR does gauge that there is dissatisfaction with the economic situation and differences of opinion over the leadership; however, the "threat" of the United States has unified the elite and consolidated the Great Leader's position.

¶5. (S) In another meeting with MFA North Korea watcher Maksim Volkov, we were told that Russia not only saw a nuclear test as an "unacceptable" threat to the nonproliferation regime, but also saw testing as a threat to Russian territory because of the possible release of radioactive material. Volkov said that Russian "experts" (not otherwise identified) believed that it would have taken years and substantial technical skill to prepare and test a nuclear device. He speculated without offering any evidence that the DPRK lacked an indigenous capability to carry out a test and had received technical assistance from Pakistan in order to do so. Volkov said a test could occur with little advance notice.

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